

Interview With Sadie Flint
in Eastham, Massachusetts

by Tales of Cape Cod, Inc.
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Q: The recording is the property of Tales of Cape Cod, Inc. and it cannot be reproduced without the written consent of the Tales of Cape Cod, Inc. November 30, 1977. Today I'm visiting with Sadie Flint of Eastham, Massachusetts.

Mrs. Flint, what was the date of your birth?

Sadie Flint: November 18, 1904.

Q: And what was your maiden name?

Sadie Flint: Chase.

Q: Where were you born?

Sadie Flint: In Eastham.

Q: Do you have a nickname?

Sadie Flint: No.

Q: Are you a Mayflower descendant?

Sadie Flint: Yes.

Q: Can you tell me anything about your ancestors?

Sadie: I'm descended from Nicholas Snow and Lieutenant Rogers and Stephen Hopkins. Deacon John also, but he came over in 1631.

Q: Deacon John?

Sadie: John Doane.

Q: Do you have any idea of what age they were when they came over?

Sadie: Nicholas Snow I think was perhaps thirty or forty. I think he had a family. Stephen Hopkins had a son and daughter, so I imagine he was around that age. Deacon John Doane was a young man.

Q: And what was your grandfather's name?

Sadie: Francis W. Smith.

Q: That's your paternal grandfather? And what did he do for a livelihood?

Sadie: He had a farm and he had a weir out in the Bay, where he caught fish and sent them to Boston. And then later, maybe in 1910 or '11, he built cottages on the bluff on the Cove and rented them to people. And that was about-- kept him busy.

Q: Can you tell me about the weirs?

Sadie: I just remember riding with him out to get fish from the weir. We used to ride out in a duck cart with a horse and ride it almost-- you had to go out to the weir, but you really got into deep water,

so the water would be way up to the horse's belly and sometimes a little higher. And then my grandfather would get out. He had long boots on, long overalls, oilskins. Get out and they'd take the fish from the weir and put them into the cart and go back to shore with a cart full of fish.

Q: How did they get the fish out of the weirs?

Sadie: With a pitchfork.

Q: And then where would they take the fish?

Sadie: He took his back to the Eastham-- near the depot, where the ice-house was. Take them back there and they would pack them in barrels with ice, and that night they'd go on the night train to Boston. But there was no refrigeration then.

Q: Where was the ice-house?

Sadie: It was near the Eastham depot. Near one of those ponds. They used to cut the ice from the pond.

Q: And what did your grandfather grow?

Sadie: He grew turnips and asparagus and strawberries. Then he had a small garden with other things in it for the house, for our food. And that was about all he grew. He had big fields of turnips and asparagus.

Q: Can you tell me about pitting? Explain pitting to me?

Sadie: Well, they would top the turnips, take the green tops off,

and they dug a deep hole in the ground, right in the turnip field. It might be maybe five or six feet deep and they'd fill that with turnips, and as the orders came in for turnips to be shipped away, they would take them from those pits, because the turnips weren't good until they'd had a little frost.

Q: Did they pick them before the frost?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: And did they cover the turnips?

Sadie: They covered the pit. I think they covered it with dirt, and then as the orders came in, they dug them out.

Q: Can you remember any stories that your grandfather might have passed on?

Sadie: I remember his telling about the creek, and I always thought it was spelled with an "i" [crick], but that was his way of talking. Instead of saying a brook or a stream, he always called it a creek.

Q: And how would you spell that?

Sadie: C-r-i-c-k, I suppose.

Q: And could you tell me about the story that Captain Sparrow told you about your grandfather?

Sadie: Captain Sparrow said that when he was a small boy he and some other boys watched my grandfather put the granite posts, that had been shipped, I suppose, from Vermont maybe-- put them in at the

Evergreen Cemetery, and he said they were so big and heavy, they marveled at his strength, because he was doing it alone.

Q: And lifting them by himself?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Do you remember anything else about your grandfather?

Sadie: He was very-- as I look back at when he was younger and I was growing up, he was very kind and thoughtful. Whenever he went away, he always brought me some little gift. He really was a very good-- he was like a father to me.

Q: Can you tell me about your grandmother Sarah-- Amanda Smith?

Sadie: She gave me a good home and did everything she could for me. Of course, she was older. She couldn't ever be a real mother in lots of ways, because of her age, but I had everything I needed. Many things I wanted which I didn't get. But she was kind.

Q: How old were you when you went to live with your grandmother?

Sadie: I always lived with her. Well, I suppose I lived a little while in Orleans, but after my brother was born, when I was eighteen months old, I came to my grandparents' home and I never left.

Q: Can you tell me about your grandmother? First of all, where was she born?

Sadie: She was born in Topeka, Kansas.

Q: And can you tell me about that?

Sadie: Her father went out there with his sister and her family and found it-- he thought it was a good place to live, so he came back here and married. His name was George Doane and he came back and married Harriet Snow and took her out there to Topeka. She lived three years, and my grandmother was born out there, and her mother lived three years and then died. And her father, George Doane, brought my grandmother back here and her grandmother, Snow, brought her up.

Q: Tell me the story of her family living in Kansas.

Sadie: They lived in sod huts. And Topeka was just a small village, as I remember her father telling about it. She told me what he told her. Of course, now it's a thriving huge city.

Q: And when did she come back to Cape Cod?

Sadie: When she was three years old. Her father brought her back by stage-coach. It was in the Civil War days. She was born in 1861. So it was 1864 when they came on. I guess the trip was rather slow and rather frightening in spots.

Q: She was born in 1861?

Sadie: '61.

Q: Were there stories passed down about the trip by stage-coach?

Sadie: No. Not really.

Q: What was the day like, living with your grandmother?

Sadie: Well, of course, during the week I went to school. By barge. We used to call it a barge. Of course, when I went to school, it was drawn by horses, and then later we went by automobile. And then Saturdays I had to clean the lamps, the kerosene lamps.

Q: Tell me about that.

Sadie: Well, the chimneys had to be washed and the wicks had to be trimmed, and the kerosene lamp had to be filled with oil. I didn't have many chores really. She thought going to school was enough, I guess.

Q: Did she have an occupation?

Sadie: No. Just a homemaker. She was interested in geneology.

Q: Can you tell me about the Village Improvement Society that she started?

Sadie: A group of women started it, and the first thing they did was to start the library, which was in the top-- the second floor of the George Clark grocery store, which used to be at the depot. That was the only store in Eastham. Then they moved up to where the library is now. A man gave them the land. Didn't give it to them, but he sold it to them for-- no, I think he gave it to them. And they started a library.

Q: Can you tell me what year that was?

Sadie: I think it was 1887. It's on a marble thing at the top of the door as you go into the library. It's engraved VIS 1887, and

more people asked me what VIS meant. They couldn't figure it out what it meant.

Q: What does it mean?

Sadie: Village Improvement Society.

Q: Can you tell me anything else about the Village Improvement Society?

Sadie: Well, they made their money by having ice cream socials and having entertainments. Seems queer nowadays that they could make money in that way, but that's apparently what kept them going. They made their own ice cream and sold it.

Q: Well, that was quite an honor, for a woman to be so active in an organization in those days, wasn't it?

Sadie: Yes, it was. There were about eight or nine women, and when the deed was given to the-- when it was recorded at the Court House, the men had to sign it, because the women had no legal right to sign it. So husbands and brothers had to sign it for the women. And they did no work at all.

Q: And they had the old mill there at one time?

Sadie: Yes, they kept the old mill. At one time they thought of making the old mill over into a library, and then they changed their minds. But they did keep it, and although it wasn't kept up, they tried to keep it somewhat in good repair, so it was-- finally they gave it to the town for a dollar, and the town maintained it after that.

Q: Was that recently that they gave it to the town?

Sadie: I don't know just what year it was.

Q: Can you tell me about the old mill? Is it still open?

Sadie: Yes, it's open every summer. They have two millers, you know, people who explain all about the workings of the mill. It does work on windy days.

Q: Can you explain that?

Sadie: The sails are put on and the mill runs and one time-- once in a while they grind corn and sell it to visitors. I don't think they charge anything to go into it. They show them how the mill would go and how they used to grind all the corn and flour.

Q: Can you tell me about the sails and how they operate?

Sadie: Well, the sails are put on the wings of the windmill, and when the wind is strong it makes the wings go around and that swings the top around and that makes the shaft in the windmill, down inside, grind the big stones together and have the corn ground.

Q: And what was your father's name?

Sadie: Ezra Leon Chase.

Q: Where was he born?

Sadie: I believe in East Harwich.

Q: Can you tell me about him?

Sadie: Well, I didn't live with him, so I don't know too much about him. He was a good businessman and very well respected in the community.

Q: What did he do for a livelihood?

Sadie: He drove a butcher cart. He used to deliver milk and deliver meat. And then he had a market up in town for a while. He studied cutting meat. He went to Chicago to Swift & Company and studied cutting meat, and thought of working there, but he came back to Orleans.

Q: Didn't the Swift family live on the Cape originally?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Do you remember where they lived?

Sadie: Well, the old Swift-Daley house is supposed to have been one of their houses. And it is, I think, but it wasn't one of the earliest houses. Gustavus Swift was supposed to have lived there at one time and it's always been called the Swift house. And then they went to Chicago.

Q: Tell me about your father's meat cart.

Sadie: He had everything in it. Ham, all kinds of meat. Once in a while a box of candy way up on the top shelf. I suppose it was penny candy. And I think just meat was all he-- then he took orders for turkeys and geese and ducks people wanted for the holidays.

Q: Do you remember the other carts that they used in those days?

Sadie: They had a bakery cart, which came from Orleans, and they came once a week.

Q: What sort of things did he have? Cakes and all that?

Sadie: Oh, yes. And the hermits were wonderful. Nobody's ever been able to make that kind of a cookie. I wish he'd left the recipe with somebody.

Q: I do too.

Sadie: And the grocery cart came from North Eastham. They came once a week and then delivered the next day or the next two days after. They had everything, sold everything.

Q: Must have been a very big cart.

Sadie: I guess it was. And a very amusing delivery man.

Q: What was his name?

Sadie: George Wiley. Have you heard of him yet?

Q: No. Tell me about George Wiley.

Sadie: Well, he was a character. He was very witty and funny and once in a while the horse would run away. He'd be in someone's house. He'd go in and talk and, of course, he didn't pay any attention to the horse, and once in a while the horse would go down the road and he'd have to go after it. But he was a very witty, humorous man. Everybody loved to have him come.

Q: Sounds like he enjoyed his job.

Sadie: He did. No one would ever do it better.

Q: Do you remember any other type of carts that would come around?
Tinsmith?

Sadie: Tinsmiths came, I think, during the summer. Sometimes a gypsy wagon. They seemed to have ladders and wooden things, but I don't remember anything more about them.

Q: Oh, they were selling ladders?

Sadie: Yes, as I remember it.

Q: Do you remember any stories about the gypsies?

Sadie: No. One woman, a neighbor, used to tell us to stay off the roads when they were going up and down, because they stole children and everything. I guess it kind of frightened us.

Q: Could you tell me about your recreation when you were a young girl?

Sadie: After school we played. We played simple games, but we had a real good time. We'd play until dark. And then I joined the Grange when I was fourteen years old, and that was a very active organization.

Q: What did you do in that?

Sadie: Of course there was a ritual to follow. And then we had lecture hours, they called / ^{them} , when we had entertainments. And they got up plays and they had dances, and it was a very-- all the young people belonged. We had a lot of fun.

Q: Tell me about your trips to the Life Saving Station.

Sadie: Captain Penniman used to take us down. We had one picnic in the summer and he'd take all the neighbors down. He'd go across with a boat to the old Coast Guard Station and then come back and get another load. And I think somebody drove their horse around with the baskets and pails and everything, the food they were carrying. He had quite a large boat and he liked to-- he was a very kind, accommodating man.

Q: That was a yearly picnic then?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Was it on any particular day in the year?

Sadie: I don't remember that it was.

Q: Can you tell me something about Captain Penniman?

Sadie: I remember his wife. We used to call her Aunt Gustie. As I remember, he was an old man. He had a white beard and he was kind of short and stout. One year, when I was recovering from pneumonia, I couldn't leave the bedroom, but I heard him, he was telling stories to the men up in the kitchen, about how he used to go up in Eskimo land and they used to crawl in the houses. First I thought he was talking about some kind of animals, because I couldn't imagine people crawling in houses.

Q: Do you know what he'd done with trading?

Sadie: He went to the whales, I suppose. Furs probably.

Q: Did he trade with the Eskimos? You mentioned that, didn't you?

Sadie: I think he took things that he could give them. They wanted bright things, of course. But I don't know.

Q: Do you remember the name of Captain Penniman's ship?

Sadie: No.

Q: Do you remember anything about Captain and Mrs. Penniman's house?

Sadie: I used to like to go in there, because the furniture was so highly polished, and on one wall he had all his seagoing instruments that he had used on shipboard. It was thrilling, because I didn't know what they meant. I suppose it was a barometer and different thermometers and different things, wind velocity and all like that. But he had quite a collection of scrimshaw and things that the sailors had made in one room.

Q: Do you remember anything about his

?

Sadie: No.

Q: Do you know how long the trips were?

Sadie: Sometimes a couple of years. His wife used to go with him.

Q: Did she?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Would you happen to know about any stories that might have been passed down about the trips?

Sadie: There is a story that they said at one time he got mad at

one of the crew and he put him in a barrel and they had to feed him through a hole. Some people say that's not so, but you hear it once in a while.

Q: Do you know why he was mad?

Sadie: No. But I think he had to be a stern captain. He had all those men under him, and no doubt they got unruly at times and he had to make them mind or else I don't know what he would do. He had to put them in some kind of confinement.

Q: Is the house in use then now?

Sadie: No. It's National Seashore.

Q: What else do you remember as a young girl? Any shipwrecks?

Sadie: I remember the shipwreck we went to in Truro. The boat was just off the shore. They said there was a cat and canary in the cabin alive and well. The men had been frightened and crawled out and frozen to death.

Q: Do you remember what year that was?

Sadie: Would have been 1911 or '12, I'm not sure.

Q: You did go to see the wreck?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Can you tell me about the roads in this town?

Sadie: They weren't good. I remember how wet we used to get and

muddy, and deep ruts and used to get stuck. The wagon used to get stuck sometimes, but after while they began to put gravel and stone on them, so they were dry.

Q: You said the wagon used to get stuck. Is that how you traveled?

Sadie: ?

Q: Did you have buggies?

Sadie: Buggies and democrat wagons. They had two seats, you know, for four people.

Q: Two?

Sadie: Yes. Truck wagons and dump carts.

Q: You mentioned dump carts before. What are they?

Sadie: Well, they just had two wheels. When no one was sitting in the front, they dumped back. But if you had a load of anything, they would just tip up and the load would go out onto the ground. And when a man was sitting at the front on the seat, the front of the cart, of course it kept it level and you kept it up.

Q: What did they use those for?

Sadie: Oh, I think when they brought-- like they put seaweed around my old house. In the winter, you know, they kept seaweed around it to make the place warmer. They'd go down to the beach and get a load of seaweed and they'd bring it back in a dump cart. Then when the man got off the seat, it would dump back and the seaweed would all

fall off. And I suppose they'd use it for other farm chores, but I don't remember what they did. Everybody had one though.

Q: We could use one today.

Sadie: Yes, we could.

Q: Tell me about using seaweed around your house. I haven't heard that story.

Sadie: Oh, you haven't? I didn't speak about that before maybe. They used to put seaweed around the house. Up in Maine they put tarpaper on the lower part of the house, but, of course, here we have seaweed, and they packed it up with-- maybe it would come up to the bottom of the windows on the first floor. And leave it there all winter and it seemed to help the house. Of course, the floors were cold. None of the houses had big basements and they were very cold.

Q: The houses were built right on the ground, is that it?

Sadie: Yes. We had a basement over there, but they said when they were digging it it washed in three or four times before they could finally get it cleaned out and put stone up to hold it. But there aren't many Cape houses like that, you know. Now Mrs. Macomber's house down there, second on the left, they don't have any basement at all. Bertha Keefe's house in Eastham-- do you know where she lives?

Q: No.

Sadie: She just has a Cape Cod cellar, they call it. Just a little

round place. There's room enough for her to have a furnace down there. That's where they used to keep their milk, to keep it cold. And the butter cold. In those little Cape Cod sand-- little dug-out basements.

Q: Cape Cod cellar. What else did they keep in there besides their milk?

Sadie: Oh, butter and milk, and they might have kept meat maybe. See, they had no-- unless they had an icebox, we used to call it, and brought ice up from the icehouse, they had no way of keeping things cold.

Q: You were talking about the school barges before. Can you tell me about those?

Sadie: Well, when I first went to school, they were drawn by two horses. We had to leave very early in the morning. It took a long while to get to school. And I guess not until I was ten or eleven years old did we have really a bus, and then it was a funny kind of a looking bus. Had to go up in the back, there were steps in the back, and we walked up into the bus. It was a strange looking thing. We thought it was wonderful though, because it was faster than going with horses.

Q: Do you remember milk deliveries?

Sadie: I remember Mr. Doane,

Doane.

He delivered milk in Orleans, but, of course, through this neighborhood we had our own cows, and we didn't have to buy milk. And then he used to-- I remember going into his barn when they were milking

at night, and they'd strain the milk through, oh, the whitest cheese-cloth I ever saw, and strain it down into these great big cans, and then they'd take it to the depot and it would be shipped at night to Provincetown. They had to get it down, so it wouldn't sour.

Q: Speaking of the school barges, tell me about the school in Eastham, the little red school.

Sadie: I went there until I had been through the eighth grade. Then I had to go to Orleans. The teachers usually stayed two or three years, and it really was a nice experience. We sat around the pot-bellied stove at lunch time and ate our cold lunches. Until the last of it. The primary teacher got the school committee to permit her to make cocoa. So she made cocoa in a big kettle and we had-- kind of weak cocoa, but it was something hot to drink. We had a good time. The school day was quite long. I think we learned-- had a good beginning anyway.

Q: Tell me about when the other two schools were moved there.

Sadie: I think I must have been, oh, seven or eight years old when they moved the school from South Eastham down there, to that spot. And they moved it on rollers. I remember we got in and rode it a ways.

SIDE TWO

Q: They moved it on rollers, you said?

Sadie: On rollers.

Q: And when did they move the other?

Sadie: I suppose they moved it about the same time, because when I went to the primary school, it was about the first year that those schools had all been in one spot. Before that they'd been separated.

Q: Tell me about when they built on the addition to make them all one building. What year was that, do you remember?

Sadie: It might have been 1911 or '12 when they enclosed that square which was between the three buildings, and rainy days we could go there and play instead of staying in the classroom. Sometimes some of the teachers had games out there for us. But not many. There weren't many games in those days.

Q: I was going to ask you, what games did you play?

Sadie: I don't remember any really, because it didn't make much of an impression on me.

Q: Do you remember the dedication of the Monument in Provincetown?

Sadie: I remember going. We went on an excursion on the railroad. I suppose that was a cheaper rate. And we went down and I remember the crowd of people and President Taft. And it was just a mob of people and I was just a little girl, so everything-- I think they made speeches, but it didn't mean much to me.

Q: Do you remember what the train ride was like?

Sadie: It was slow and crowded. I don't remember anything more

about it.

Q: Was there a lot of singing or merrymaking?

Sadie: I expect there was. There was a lot of merriment, but that's all I remember.

Q: Can you tell me about your train trip to Provincetown to visit your cousins?

Sadie: We used to go on the eleven o'clock train and my grandmother's cousin would meet us and he had a high-stepping pair of horses and he'd meet us and take us down to his house. He had one of those real good houses in Provincetown, which now has been made into apartments, some nice apartments, and I used to love to go there. It was just a fine house. And then we'd have a dinner, and then we'd have our supper at night, and the next morning we'd come back on the morning train.

Q: Can you tell me about your Thanksgivings?

Sadie: They were the same as we have now. We had turkey and all the vegetables and pies and everything, same as people have now.

Q: Can you tell me about the suet pudding?

Sadie: Well, it's a plum pudding, only suet is chopped up and put in it for shortening. And it's delicious.

Q: You mentioned the house in Provincetown. Can you tell me anything about that house?

Sadie: No, I just remember how large the rooms were and my-- I guess she would be my second cousin, had a beautiful piano and a Victrola. Didn't have anything but Victrolas then. And she had all these operatic arias and operatic scores and she'd tell me what they meant. She was very musically inclined. She gave music lessons. She studied in Boston. I used to think it was a great treat to go there. And the rooms were different than the house where I lived here. They were large. High ceilings and a beautiful staircase, where over here in my old Cape Cod house the staircase just went straight up, you know. I enjoyed going there a great deal.

Q: Do you remember what the staircase in that house was like?

Sadie: It had a lovely stair-rail, I remember. It was curved. Went out from a big hall. It was just a lovely-- oh, I thought it was a beautiful house. And now when I go past, it's all just cut up into different rooms.

Q: Can you tell me about any of the snowstorms?

Sadie: We used to have big snowstorms. Once the bus driver took us to school and had to come get us at half past ten because the snow was collecting so fast and the horses couldn't go through it. So he came and got us. We went there at eight and he came back at ten and picked us up to take us home.

And the men used to dig the snow. A group of men would meet from one section of town and they'd dig until they met another group. No snowplows then.

Q: It was all done by hand then?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Can you tell me about some of the old-fashioned gadgets they have in the museum?

Sadie: They have the shoes that the horses used to use when they cut the salt hay. They were made of wood and they looked as though they fitted over the horses' hoofs, so he wouldn't sink down. The horse wouldn't sink down so much in the marshy land.

Q: Did they call them shoes?

Sadie: I believe so.

Q: Can you tell me about the asparagus bunchers?

Sadie: Yes, they were clamps that you-- you put the asparagus in and the clamp would only hold so many stalks, and then with a pedal they'd clamp together. Then you'd tie them and then cut them off, cut the ends off even. And that was it, making a bunch of asparagus. And women usually did that, and the men cut the asparagus.

Q: Are there any other interesting things there that you can think of?

Sadie: There's an Indian skull. When they put in Hemenway Road they dug up an Indian skeleton, and then shortly after they found the skull, which we have. And a man from the Smithsonian Institute has tried to buy it, because he says it's a very good skull. It's a woman's skull apparently, because the teeth are all worn down. They said that women had to chew the leather, the hides of animals, in order to make it pliable to make into clothes. So they worked on

it with their teeth, and the teeth of this skull are worn down.

Q: And the skull is in the Eastham Museum?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: And where's the skeleton?

Sadie: They took it. I think Harvard has it. They took it away.

Q: They have any idea how old the skull is?

Sadie: No. Nobody seems to know.

Q: What year did they find it?

Sadie: It was since the museum opened. Oh, I should say eight years ago. There must have been a camping ground along here, because down here where my son's house is the lawn is full of little pieces of shell, and it must have been a camping ground for Indians along this section of the cove in the summer, and they probably fished. Because the atmosphere was good, you know. The heat wasn't too bad.

Q: And a good location.

Sadie: Good location.

Q: Do you remember any Indian artifacts that might have been found?

Sadie: My grandfather found one once that looked kind of like a dog's head, but I can't found it now either. Somebody's taken it or it's been mislaid. But it was carved out and rounded. The ears were rounded and the muzzle was rounded. There didn't seem to be

any sharp edges. Then we had some round stones

and, of course, arrowheads were found every once in a while.

Q: What do you mean by a round stone?

Sadie: Just a stone that was molded to be real round. It wasn't what the ocean did. It was just worked on to make it a round stone.

Q: Did they use that for grinding?

Sadie: They might have. They have one in the museum which has a crevice around the middle of it, as though something might have been tied in that groove to hold it secure. I don't know if they used it to sling against something or what they did. I don't know.

Q: Getting back to your grandmother, can you tell me any of the stories she might have told you about the packets?

Sadie: I remember her saying that they didn't have any supplies until the packet had come in. It came into Orleans. Went through the inlet, the Nauset Inlet, up to Orleans, where the Yacht Club is now, and brought all the supplies to this part of town.

Q: What do you mean, supplies?

Sadie: I suppose the things they couldn't raise here, like sugar and flour maybe, and spices. I suppose clothing too and materials, because if there was no train when she was little, not until she was nine or ten years old, things had to be brought some way.

Q: Did your mother ever speak of going to Boston by packet?

Sadie: No, she never spoke of it. I don't think they had any needs to go anywhere.

Q: Can you tell me about your grandmother's stories of the railroad?

Sadie: She said she remembered when there were no trees. You could see how the railroad came down through, and when it went through to Provincetown my grandmother stood in the window and watched it come down the railroad track. Doesn't seem possible now, because there are so many trees.

Q: What do you remember about the railroad?

Sadie: I just remember they brought the-- it used to come down through-- a lot of people took the train to go to Orleans. It used to be kind of fun to go down to the depot and see people come and go.

Q: Can you tell me about Miss May Knowles?

Sadie: She was educated at Bridgewater State College. It was called normal school when she went. And it must have been in the late 1800's. She taught a little while. My mother went to school to her. But she didn't like teaching too well and she had a big farm, so she gave it up. But she was very interested in community things. She never married. She lived in the farm with her brother, with two brothers. One was quite a care. The other one was a help to her. One of her other brothers was in with Timothy Smith in Roxbury in a hardware store. Timothy Smith is the man who gave the Town Hall to Eastham. In 1912 it was dedicated.

And I used to call her Miss May, because my grandmother thought

I should put Miss before everything. Miss or Aunt. And Miss May, she and my grandmother went to school together, so they were very friendly, and they started the Village Improvement Society. And they worked hard at it and Miss May always had ideas and things. At one time she had a group of us down there and we cooked all Saturday and then ate our supper of the things that we cooked. And I never have tasted brown bread as good as that brown bread we made down at her farm.

Q: What did you cook that day?

Sadie: Brown bread. And we sat on the porch-- it must have been a fairly warm day-- we set a table up on the porch and we ate our supper. I've forgotten what the other girls made. I think there was a hearty dish. It might have been beans, I don't know. I don't know if it was a Saturday or not. We had brown bread and hot rolls and there was a pie, and that was the most wonderful meal. I think I'll always remember it.

Q: What was the occasion for the dinner?

Sadie: Nothing particularly. She just had us down there to cook. She thought we ought to have cooking school, but there was no cooking school here. She was a very pretty woman. I often wondered why she never married, because she was very attractive. She liked horses and she had high-stepping horses and some that worked on the farm. They were very prosperous people.

Q: What do you mean by high-stepping horses?

Sadie: Well, they weren't farm horses. They were always well cared for and they were it seemed to me the kind of horses that would just drag a fancy wagon. They were different looking than the farm animals were.

Q: They pranced, I guess?

Sadie: They pranced, I guess.

Q: What else do you remember about Miss Knowles?

Sadie: Yes, she was Miss. I don't remember a great deal more. She was always into some project in the town. And there were no trees between my big house and their house, so my grandmother-- they didn't have a telephone for years, because the telephone company wouldn't put poles down the Fort Hill Road. So if a telephone call came in for her, or if there was any trouble, Grandma would hang a dark cloth out of the upstairs window, so May Knowles would see it. Aunt May or Miss May. And then she'd come up to see what the trouble was, to see what was going on.

Q: A means of communication.

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Do you remember what her house was like?

Sadie: It was a big house. It was a very nice house. I don't remember too much about it. I know one thing, they had a gong, a dinner gong, in the dining room. We thought that was pretty nice, because we liked to ring that, of course. And I remember she had a

little baby grand piano. Her father had been a big farmer and it was a very good house. Just herself and her brother and a very cross dog lived there.

Q: Can you tell me about any traditions you had in your grandmother's family? For instance, was it traditional to have baked beans on Saturday night?

Sadie: Oh, yes. Brown bread and baked beans. And sometimes home-made bread. Of course, my grandmother always made homemade bread two or three times a week.

Q: That was the routine baking?

Sadie: I don't think people thought of buying bread from a baker. I don't know if he baked much bread. Perhaps he did in the latter part of his going down through the town. Everybody made their own bread.

Q: Were there any other special traditional meals? For instance, Sunday night supper.

Sadie: Well, our's used to be crackers and milk. Was for years. We ate a big dinner. You know, Sunday dinner was the big meal, and then at night we had crackers and milk. And I think a lot of the families had Sunday night supper like that.

Q: What type of cracker was that?

Sadie: Probably be the old-fashioned hard bread. Have you seen them? They're round. They used to be round. You can get the round ones

now. And some of them are oblong. Round pilots I think they're called. And that was our supper.

Q: That was a light supper?

Sadie: Yes.

Q: Any other traditions you can remember?

Sadie: I can't think of any right now.

(END OF TAPE)